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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 ANKARA 006062

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Gul Calls Rice to Thank for US Support in Luxembourg -
Milliyet
Turkey to Receive 10 Billion Euro in EU Aid Over 10 Years -
Vatan
UK Threatened Nicosia During Luxembourg Talks - Turkiye
Schroeder to Visit Turkey October 12 - Hurriyet
Borrell: Annan Plan the Best Solution to Cyprus Problem -
Milliyet
Amr Moussa: Turkey a Bridge between Christian, Muslim Worlds
- Hurriyet
37 Million Americans Live Under Poverty Line - Aksam
US Kills 42 Insurgents in al-Anbar - Milliyet
Suicide Attack Kills 22 in Iraq - Star

OPINION MAKERS

Gul Thanks Rice for Her EU Support - Radikal
Borrell Invites Talat, Papadopoulos to Negotiating Table -
Radikal
Cyprus to be Main Problem in EU-Turkey Talks - Zaman
Arab League: Turkey will be a Bridge among Religions - Yeni
Safak
Yerevan Hopeful on EU-Turkey Negotiations - Yeni Safak
Putin Congratulates Turkey on EU - Cumhuriyet
Rice to Tour Central Asia October 10-13 - Cumhuriyet
Riyadh Uneasy with Iran's Interest in Iraq - Cumhuriyet
Hurricane Katrina Reveals the Poor in the US - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

UK, US Pressed Greek Cypriots to Support Turkey: Strong messages by the UK and US forced the Greek Cypriots to end their objections to Turkey's EU accession process during meetings in Luxembourg earlier this week, Turkish papers claim. Secretary Rice called Greek Cypriot Foreign Minister George Iacovou to warn him against blocking Turkey's bid, and British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw threatened that if accession talks with Turkey were to collapse, Turkish troops would never leave Cyprus, and events would soon lead to recognition of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.'

Gul Thanks Rice for Support at EU: Turkish Foreign Ministry Spokesman Namik Tan said at a weekly news briefing on Wednesday that US support for the opening of entry talks between Turkey and the EU was 'clear, natural, and correct. We are pleased with it.' Tan said that FM Gul called Secretary Rice Tuesday night to thank her for the

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contributions made by the Secretary and other high level US Government officials. 'Secretary Rice said that relations will be further developed, and that she was pleased to have contributed to the process,' Tan emphasized, adding that 'the US has supported this project because considers it important to support initiatives based on common values such as democracy, the rule of law, and a free-market economy. The fact that a European Turkey will further contribute to regional stability is another reason for US support. Within this framework, the United States has provided Turkey with strong support,' Tan noted.

Erdogan on Turkey's October 3 Process: Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan told the all-news channel NTV yesterday that Turkey will open its ports and airports to the Greek Cypriots only if the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots is ended. Erdogan accused the opposition parties in Turkey of seeing only the 'half-empty glass' regarding development since October 3. 'It is impossible to take something without giving something in return. We should look at our economic and social gains in this process, as seen in the continuing rise in the domestic stock market, and the decrease in

interest rates and inflation figures,' Erdogan said. He added that Turkey has maintained its veto right in NATO and other international organizations. Erdogan said that during his half-hour phone conversation with Secretary Rice early Monday, he explained that the EU deal would not go through if Turkish demands were not met. Erdogan said that he had later talked to British PM Tony Blair, and that the Turkish delegation decided to go to Luxembourg after receiving a written guarantee from the British PM. Responding to a question, Erdogan said that Turkey will not go to general elections before 2007. 'Foreign investors are looking for stability in Turkey,' Erdogan said. Asked when the parliament would ratify a protocol extending Turkey's customs union to new EU members including Cyprus, Erdogan said that his government was 'looking into' the matter, but added that 'there is no need to hurry.'

AKP Defends October 3 against Domestic Critics: Turkish opposition parties and some analysts say that the ruling AK Party made too many concessions in signing on to a negotiating mandate with the 25-member EU on Monday evening. The framework agreement reached in Luxembourg will allow the long-anticipated accession talks to begin. On Wednesday, Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul told the parliament that the EU deal is in Turkey's interests because 'for the past 50 years, Turkey has had its face turned toward Europe. The reform process in Turkey has now become institutionalized.' Gul said the government had studied the framework accord carefully before deciding that it fully met Turkish concerns and that it was appropriate for the FM to go to Luxembourg for the EU ceremony launching the talks on Monday. But Onur Oymen, speaking on behalf of the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), said the deal was a 'dilution' of what the EU had offered to Turkey last December, when the decision to open entry talks with Ankara was taken. Oymen said the new deal called on Turkey to open its ports and airports to the Greek Cypriots. Gul shrugged off accusations by the opposition that the AKP government had failed to inform the parliament of the talks on the framework agreement. 'We are not a coalition government,' he said. EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn will hold talks in Ankara on Thursday and Friday. Government Spokesman Cemil Cicek said the 'EU screening process' will begin on October 20 in the areas of science and research, followed on October 26 by education and culture, papers report. European experts told "Zaman" that Cyprus will be the largest obstacle for Ankara in the accession negotiations with Brussels. Experts predicted that other issues such as freedom for religious minorities, military-civilian relations, and Armenian 'genocide' claims would not prove to be 'insurmountable.'

US Seeks Ankara's Support on Iran's Nuclear Program: Robert Joseph, Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, recently visited Ankara to discuss Iranian nuclear aspirations, according to a special defense report in the English-language "Turkish Daily News" (TDN.) Joseph said that a nuclear Iran would be a major threat for its neighbors, including Turkey, and the entire Middle East, a concern Turkey shares with the US. 'We definitely do not want an Iran that has atomic weapons. We do not want nuclear weapons in our region,' said one senior Turkish diplomat. Analysts in Ankara and Washington believe that Turkey's position on this matter was closer to that of the US than on the issue of Iraq. Turkey has officially backed EU efforts to dissuade Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, the diplomat said. During Joseph's Ankara talks, Turkish officials declined to give the US a pledge of blanket support, mainly because Washington's 'end-game' remains unclear. On October 3, the US called on governments to freeze all transfers of nuclear technology to Iran, charging that it had violated the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Last week, Stephen Rademaker, US Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Non-Proliferation, made the plea at a UN panel on disarmament. But Russia, which has a contract to build a nuclear reactor in the Iranian city of Bushehr, flatly rejected the US call. Russia's UN Spokesman, Sergei Trepelkov, said Rademaker's remarks were 'nothing new' and insisted that Russia would not end its cooperation with Iran. 'Certainly we are not interested in Iran getting nuclear weapons, but as for Bushehr, it is a purely peaceful project that fully meets the demands of the International Atomic Energy Agency,' Trepelkov said. 'I don't think there is any ground for ending this cooperation.'

Minister Celik Calls for Reopening of Halki Seminary: Education Minister Huseyin Celik said that it is 'wrong' that the Halki Seminary in Istanbul has remained closed up to now. Celik said that the facility could be opened 'within 24 hours.' 'People coming from different religions have the right to express their beliefs. This has nothing to do with the EU criteria. My religion orders and my culture requires' that the seminary be opened, Celik reportedly said. The Minister pointed out that there are '5,000 mosques in Europe, and 500 students study Islamic theology at a university in Rotterdam that has a Turkish

rector.'

New Border Crossing between Turkey and Iraq: Turkish Foreign Ministry Spokesman Namik Tan said at a weekly press briefing Wednesday that the issue of opening a new border crossing between Turkey and Iraq was discussed during the visit of Iraqi Planning and Development Minister Bahram Salih to Ankara last week. Tan said that the Iraqi government had proposed some time ago the opening of a new border-gate five kilometers west of the Habur crossing. The border post would include a motorway and railway connections. He noted that the Turkish side had proposed an alternative site at Ovakoy. Tan said that the two sides were 'evaluating the various proposals,' and predicted that the 'assessment process' would continue for some time.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Turkey and the EU

"EU's Red Lines and the Issue of Turkish Ports" Erdal Safak wrote in the mass appeal "Sabah" (10/6): "Turkey managed to cross the October 3 threshold without wiping out its 'red lines.' But, the EU has its red lines as well. EU enlargement commissioner Olli Rehn has come to Turkey prior to the start of screening process, in part to remind the Turkish side of these red lines. During this process, there will be heated debate about the access of Greek Cypriots to Turkish ports and airports. The Turkish government is planning to delay this issue for as long as possible, despite the fact that it is specifically mentioned in the sixth paragraph of the EU framework document. But the EU Commission has neither the patience nor the desire to see this issue dragged out indefinitely. The European Parliament, Greece, and the Greek Cypriots raise this issue in Brussels almost every day. Rehn, unable to resist these pressures any longer, has come to Turkey. He wants the Turkish parliament to approve the additional customs union protocol as soon as possible. Most people don't know that Turkey closed its ports to Greek Cypriot vessels not after the Cyprus operation of 1974, but only in 1987. The ban was put into effect as retaliation for the refusal of the Greek Cypriots to accept a Turkish vessel that had stopped in northern Cyprus before going to the South. The Turkish government should solve this issue as soon as possible so that it does not cause tension in relations with the EU. Moreover, there is also the danger for the issue to be carried to the International Court in the Hague or to the World Trade Organization (WTO). If it comes to that, Turkey is bound to face more trouble."

"To be Able to Live as a European"

Sami Kohen opined in the mainstream daily "Milliyet" (10/6): "For Turkey, every phase on the way to EU membership has its own difficulties. In the phase that Turkey has reached today, the most important issue is to bring Turkey to a European standard of living. That is why the public's active support and participation is every bit as important as efforts that will be made within the bureaucracy. At this very challenging phase, everyone needs to understand that we need to start thinking and acting like Europeans if we are ever to reach these standards. This is a difficult task, but not an impossible one if our effort is sincere."

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